

## Anti-Semitism

### Why have the Jews so often been persecuted?

#### 1. What are the Historical roots of Antisemitism (=hatred of Jews)?

##### Task 1:

1. Use the following information to produce a diagram explaining why the Jews were mistreated. Connect factors together with arrows labeled "so", "because" and "for example" as appropriate. Compare your diagram with that of a partner when you have finished.
2. Colour code each statement according to whether it is a religious, racial, political or economic factor. Provide a key underneath your diagram.

- Some Jews became poor and so were attracted to communism, so the rich hated them
- Jews had no homeland of their own so were regarded as unpatriotic refugees
- Jews were excluded from professions open only to Christians
- Jews were self-reliant, private people forming their own distinct communities
- Jews were historically regarded as Christ-killers
- Jews were regarded as being racially different from Western European "Aryans"
- Jews were expelled from their homeland (Israel) by the Roman Empire
- Some Jews became rich moneylenders (a job closed to Christians), so the poor hated them
- Jews were denied citizenship (basic rights) in Christian countries
- Over the centuries, Jews were expelled from Britain, Spain and Russia. Many went to Germany

Your diagram:

## 2. What were Hitler's personal views on the Jews?

- Hitler, then, fitted into a long tradition of anti-Semitism which had existed in Europe for many centuries and which had been used many times in the past when nations required scapegoats for their troubles. The Jews – wealthy, defenceless and different – were always the easiest target.
- After World War One, many Germans were willing to share Hitler's confused view that Jews were communists AND capitalist war profiteers who had 'stabbed Germany in the back' at the end of World War One: "The Jews inhabited Hitler's mind. He believed that they were the source of all evil, misfortune and tragedy. They were devils whom he had been given a divine mission to destroy..." (Lucy Dawidowicz, 1975).

### Task 2

Read through the following extracts from Hitler's book "Mein Kampf". Next to each, comment whether it provides a Christian (c), racial (r), economic (e) or political (p) reason for Hitler's anti-Semitism.

**Note:** Each quote may be a combination of more than one factor.

Quote from "Mein Kampf"	Religious, racial, economic and / or political?
"With satanic joy in his face, the black-haired Jewish youth lurks in wait for the unsuspecting girl whom he defiles with his blood, thus stealing her from her people..."	
"The personification of the devil as the symbol of all evil assumes the living shape of the Jew..."	
"Germany is the next great war aim of Bolshevism. It requires all the force of a young missionary idea to raise our people up again, to free them from the snares of this international serpent..."	
"I believe that I am acting in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator: 'by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord'."	
"The Jew has sinned against the masses in the course of the centuries, he has squeezed and sucked the blood again and again"	

## 2. How did Hitler use propaganda to spread his views to the German people?

- Once Hitler came to power, he used vicious propaganda to spread hatred of the Jews.
- This was aimed both at children, and at adults.

### Task 3

Your teacher will give half the class a copy of

Adult propaganda: "Responses to Jewish Lackeys" (from the Nazi newspaper Der Sturmer)

Child propaganda: "The Poisonous Mushroom" (a school storybook designed by the Nazis).

- If you receive the "Adult Propaganda" handout, the task is written clearly on it.
- If you receive the "Child Propaganda" handout, your job is to read through it and choose one page from the story which you think is most interesting. Be prepared to summarise the page for the rest of the class and explain why you chose this particular section.

**[Note:** This story is 16 pages long; your teacher may wish to simply give pairs of students different selections from this rather than giving the whole book to each one of you]

### Homework / Extension Task

Produce an illustrated diagram on A3 paper entitled "Where did Hitler's Anti-Semitism come from?". Use the diagram from Task 1 as the basis of this, but use Hitler's particular statements to illustrate the original points you made. For top marks, (a) Find some other quotes from Hitler; (b) Illustrate the points with icons (e.g. a Church for religious reasons, and so on).